SOMERSET
COUNTY LIBRARY
The Heart of the Community

BILL: **HB 660**

DATE: March 10, 2026

SUBJECT: **Public Libraries – State Library Resource Center – Funding**

COMMITTEE: House Appropriations

POSITION: Support

SUBMITTED BY: Ed Goyda, Director, Somerset County Library

Dear Chair Barnes, and Vice Chair Kaiser, and members of the Committee:

I am writing in support of **HB 660 – Public Libraries – State Library Resource Center – Funding,** which would resume the annual increases to the State Library Resource Center (SLRC)'s per capita funding through FY 2032. This funding is vital to supporting the centralized coordination of a wide range of services that allow for efficient and economical library services throughout the State of Maryland.

As a rural library in one of Maryland's smallest counties, Somerset benefits immensely from the services provided by the State Library Resource Center.

This includes the majority of our online resources, including Gale's research databases, Mango Languages, and HeritageQuest's genealogical and historical collections. The State Library Resource Center also hosts, through Digital Maryland, our digital local history collections including our archive of news clippings, brochures, and other ephemera and our Crisfield National Hard Crab Derby Brochure collection. Centralized purchasing and management save the state nearly $4 million compared to the costs that each library and school would face in attempting to provide them individually.

Funding for the Resource Center also provides the SAILOR network, providing high speed Internet access for over 40,000 Somerset patrons each year.

The Resource Center's physical collection of more than 3 million items, plus their coordination of the statewide interlibrary loan service covering more than 10 million items, gives our patrons access to a much wider range of resources than our 50,000 item local collection.

The Resource Center also provides professional development trainings through the year, both in-person and virtually, that allow us to keep our staff up-to-date on new and emerging services and technology, such as the recent Public Services Conference on February 25, where Somerset had most of our staff in attendance to learn about core services skills, increasing accessibility, and community building.

The Resource Center's coordinated services fulfill critical demand for services for job seekers, early literacy, afterschool safe places, and free Internet and computer access. Library services are vital to successful schools and strong communities. We respectfully ask that you provide funding at a level that will support equity and access in our communities. Thank you for your consideration.

The Somerset County Library supports the passage of this budget item.

Sincerely,

Ed Goyda
Director, Somerset County Library